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The True Copy of a

PETITION

Presented in *July* 1683. To the

Most Christian King

BY

DEPUTIES, from those of his SUBJECTS who are of the *REFORMED RELIGION*, whose CHURCHES have been Taken from them, and Demolished.

And since That,

Have Assembled in the Open Fields, but after PRAYER, PREACHING, and Receiving of the HOLY SACRAMENT, Return'd in all peaceable manner to their respective Habitations.

Translated from the French *Printed Copy by a sure Hand, and Re-Printed at* London *by* G. C. *Anno Dom.* 1683.

TO THE KING.

SIR,

YOUR most humble Subjects of the Protestant Religion, not having power to resist the Motions of their Consciences, are constrained to Assemble Together, to call upon the Holy Name of God, and sing his Praises; and by this Religious Acting, to expose themselves to all the Violences and Rigour which a too fierce Zeal can infuse into the Breasts of your Officers. And because God hath established your Majesty for their Monarch, they are obliged to justifie their Proceedings and Behaviour before your Majesty, with all the Humility they are capable of.

These Assemblies, SIR, do no way hurt or wound that Fidelity which your Petitioners owe your Majesty; They are all accorded to sacrifice their Fortunes and their Lives for your Service. The very same Religion which constrains them to Assemble together to celebrate the Glory of God, teaches them that they can never dispense, under any Pretence whatever, with that Allegiance which is due to your Majesty. Nor has your Majesty any need to publish your Declarations to enforce them to embrace a Maxim so certain, and so well grounded upon Christianity. It remains then, SIR, that your Petitioners insist upon nothing, but what is only due to God; for as to what concerns your Majesty, their past Behaviour gives testimony of the reality and purity of their Intentions, and may serve as a security to your Majesty for the future; and in a word, your Petitioners are all ready with their Blood to sign the Oath of their Allegiance. As to what concerns their Duty towards God, your Majesty hath so much Piety to take it amiss, that they render to that great God that Worship and Adoration which they owe him, if they also presume to hope, that your Majesty will have the goodness to reflect upon their Behaviour; that you will compassionate the Desolations to which their Piety exposes them; and that perhaps you will extend your Indignation against those who have by surprize obtained so many severe Decrees and Declarations against them, and yet would further provoke your Wrath against Subjects so faithful, and so innocent.

Your Suppliants, SIR, are perswaded that God has not sent them into this World, but to glorifie him; and they will rather choose to lose their Lives a thousand times, than fail of their Duty so holy and indispensible.

It is in your Majesties power to deprive them of all the Advantages of this World, and also to doom to utter Destruction: They are ready for to sacrifice all, to suffer all Miseries at your Majesties Pleasure. *But it May be*, when your Majesty shall consider, That your Petitioners do not give way to the *Most* faithful of your Subjects [*which all the World confesses*] in their Duties to God, your Majesty will not do that Injury to his Glory and to his Goodness, as to destroy a People, for no other reason meriting your Indignation.

The Miseries of your Petitioners, SIR, only arise from the Reverence they have for the *Divinity*, whose *Word* they look upon as the only Rule of their Religious Worship.

Were the Dispute alone concerning our opposing Men for the service of your Majesty, though all the World should rebel against your Majesties Will, though all your other Subjects should fail of their Fidelity and Obedience, your Petitioners would inviolably stand by their August Monarch, and with pleasure spend the last drop of Blood in his Service.

But their Unhappiness is so great, that the Declarations put forth against them, to the prejudice of so many Edicts and Decrees made by your Majesty, and the Kings your Predecessors, appear to them incompatible with the Commands of the great Creator of Heaven and Earth:

For God hath ordained them to inſtruct their Children and their Families, and to declare unto them the Word of Life. He alſo pronounces his dreadful Anathema's againſt them who ſhut the Gates of Heaven againſt thoſe, to whom he freely opens them. He commands them to offer to him Hymns and ſpiritual Songs. Nevertheleſs, SIR, thoſe Declarations that have been ſurreptitiouſly obtained againſt us, forbid us to ſing the Pſalms of *David*, which do contain the Praiſes of God.

In ſhort, SIR, It is the pleaſure of God that we ſhould Aſſemble together in his Name, to render him the ſolemn Adoration and Honour which is due to him. Nevertheleſs, SIR, thoſe Declarations which your Petitioners Enemies have obtained againſt us by repeated Surprizes, forbid them to aſſemble together, to render to that great God the ſervice which is due to him.

During this Inability of your Petitioners, to reconcile the Will of God to what is exacted from them, they find themſelves conſtrained by their Conſciences, to expoſe themſelves to all ſorts of Calamities, for the continuance of giving Glory to the Majeſty of God, who will be ſerved according to his Word.

If the Doctrine of your Petitioners were Abominable, if their Worſhip were Scandalous, if they preferred the Creature in place of the Creator, there might be ſome Reaſon to ſollicit your Majeſty to refuſe their Protection: But all their Crime, and all the Difference between theirs, and the Catholick Religion, conſiſts in this:

That they prefer the Word of God, before the Traditions of Men: And the true Worſhip of that great God, [*who proteſts to be jealous of his honour, and that he will not yield it to any other*] before the Religious Worſhip of the Creature.

All Religion, SIR, to ſpeak properly, conſiſts only in Belief, in Prayers, and in Works: And your Petitioners believe and hold the Creed of the Holy Apoſtles, and the Lords Prayer, to be the Model of thoſe which they preſent to God, and the Commandments of that God are the Rule and Guidance of their Conduct and Converſation. They know, and have no need, according to St. *Paul*, of knowing any other but *only Jeſus Chriſt*, and *him crucified*. They acknowledge God for the only true God, and for him who ſent Jeſus Chriſt; for on this Belief it is, that our Lord hath founded Life Eternal.

Their Enemies make ſtrange Interpretations of their Opinions, and their Worſhip. However, SIR, your Petitioners implore the mercy of God. They truſt in the incomprehenſible Charity, and infinite Merits of their adorable Saviour, whom they do embrace with a conſtant and lively Faith. They have recourſe, with all humility, to the healthful ſuccour and grace of his holy Spirit; and to this Trinity it is, that they render their Adoration and Homage, invoking it after the ſame Form that the Scripture hath preſcribed in his Word. They meditate upon his Wonders. They ſing his Praiſes: And they make it their continual ſtudy to live Holily among themſelves, Juſtly toward their Neighbour, Obediently toward your Majeſty, and Religiouſly toward God.

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They therefore ſupplicate your Majeſty to be the Judge, Whether your Petitioners are unworthy of your Paternal Goodneſs, and the Honour of your Protection. Whether they merit to be thrown into that extremity of Deſtruction wherein they are at preſent over-whelm'd, ſufficient enough to move the Groans of the moſt inſenſible. And laſtly, SIR, Whether it be poſſible that they ſhould live without continuing to aſſemble together, to render to God the ſervice which they owe him.

After all this, your Petitioners cannot but pray to the great God, who advances your Throne above all the Thrones of the Earth, to incline your Majeſties heart toward your Subjects, whoſe Innocency and Allegiance is apparent to the eyes of the whole World. And if theſe your poor People ſhall yet not be able to move the Compaſſion of their Auguſt Monarch, for whom they ſhall always retain a ſincere Love, and aweful Reverence; a ſingular Veneration, and inviolable Fidelity. They do proteſt before the Face of that great God for whoſe ſake they are expoſed to ſo much Miſery, That they will render him Honour and Glory in the midſt of their moſt terrible Calamities.

But, SIR, your Petitioners hope much better things, from the Natural Equity, Goodneſs, and Piety of your Majeſty; for which Reaſon, they proſtrate themſelves at your Royal Feet, and moſt humbly implore your Majeſty,

To Recall all the Declarations, Decrees, and other Judgments, which have reduc'd them to that Deplorable Condition wherein they are, and deprive them not of the Liberty of their Conſciences, and Exerciſe of their Religion, by vertue of ſo many ſolemn Edicts, confirmed by ſo many Declarations granted them by your Majeſty, without which it is impoſſible for them to live.

[*And your Petitioner ſhall continue to pray for the Preſervation of Your Majeſty's Sacred Perſon, your Royal Family, and the Honour and Proſperity of your Kingdom.*]

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